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FOR

PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM

The Today Show

STATION

WRC TV  
NBC Network

DATE

September 8, 1981 7:00 AM

CITY

Washington, DC

SUBJECT

Interview with Henry Hurt

TOM BROKAW: A real spy story in the October issue of Reader's Digest. Henry Hurt, who's the roving editor for the Digest, has a book coming out called "Shadrin (?), the Spy Who Never Came Back." And as part of that book, we hear the story of Yuri Nosenko, who defected in 1964 from the Soviet Union, from the KGB, calling himself a colonel, who came to this country and said that he wanted to sell us some information.

Why was it so important to get Nosenko into the United States?

HENRY HURT: Presumably, their greatest interest was in convincing us that the KGB had had no interest in Lee Harvey Oswald when Oswald spent three years in the Soviet Union. And Nosenko brought us just that message. And, in fact, it was a message we were anxious to hear.

BROKAW: The fact is, his story never really checked out, and the CIA put him through very severe questioning. He was in solitary confinement for a period of time.

HURT: For years.

BROKAW: And yet he's on our payroll now.

HURT: Well, that's right. That's right. When finally Nosenko was given -- when we set him loose in 1968, the idea was he would go out and be resettled into American life and would pose no threat. Then in about '73, he was brought back, made a consultant by the CIA, and continues there to this day, even though a couple of years ago the House Assassinations Committee concluded that he had lied about Lee Harvey Oswald.